

Chito serves as Chairman of the Board at the Augustine "Pucho" Olivencia Community Center in Buffalo. Named for Chito's late father, the Olivencia Center works to provide the community with educational and recreational services and preserve the culture of this proud community. Every year, Chito chairs the Community Center's Annual Greased Pole Festival, a weekend of events. In addition, each January Chito hosts the annual Three Kings Day celebration to educate and entertain children from the throughout the community and beyond.

In addition, Chito serves as President of *Nosotros*, the largest Hispanic political organization in western New York, which owns the *Fiesta Latina* show that airs in the evenings on WHLD-AM. Chito has also volunteered his time to the renowned Sts. Columba-Brigid Roman Catholic Church by hosting masses for a year after a fire destroyed the Church in 2006.

Chito's desire to learn about other cultures is vast. In June 2004, Chito was the local Project Interchange Designee by the American Jewish Committee Buffalo-Niagara Chapter. In that capacity, Chito traveled to Israel as part of the cultural exchange program. During the trip, he met with civic and political leaders in Israel, briefing members of the local AJC chapter upon his return.

Lastly, I cannot end this speech without a few words about Chito's long career in Democratic politics. Chito has been a Democratic Committeeman in Erie County for longer than many current committee members have been alive, and his allegiance to the Democratic Party is legendary. From elections to the Buffalo School Board to Congress and the White House, Chito's commitment to the political process and to enhancing suffrage throughout the Hispanic community has been remarkable.

Madam Speaker, I ask you to join me in honoring Chito Olivencia for all that he has done for the western New York community, and join me in celebrating his retirement from active service in Erie County government.

HONORING SAND CREEK
TELEPHONE COMPANY

HON. TIMOTHY WALBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 1, 2008

Mr. WALBERG. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Sand Creek Telephone Company of Adrian, Michigan on the celebration of its one hundredth anniversary. Despite its small start, this company has flourished and remains an independent telephone service provider faithfully serving the people of south central Michigan.

In 1908, the Sand Creek Telephone Company began doing business with one switchboard and operator in the back of the Tuttle family's grocery store. Started by local farmers and business owners, the telephone company was created to serve the rural areas south of the city of Adrian. The original stockholders needed telephone service to check the weather, market prices, train schedules, and to order or sell goods. Purchased in 1912, its first telephones were old-fashioned, rectangular, wall-mounted wooden box telephones with a side crank and a Bakelite receiver. These telephones were used up until 1957 when the company upgraded to an automatic dial system.

In 1912, the Sand Creek Telephone Company moved from the Tuttle grocery store to a house on a property called Lot Six, which provided a central location within the town. From here, the company continued to experience enormous growth. By 1928, 270 households were serviced by Sand Creek Telephone Company and its lines connected to areas as far away as Lyons, Ohio. The massive web of wires that draped above the town were evidence of the rapid expansion of the company during this time. As Sand Creek Telephone Company changed hands over the years, the Board of Directors continued to hire families to run the company. Many times the husband did the maintenance and business work while the wife ran the switchboard. Children of the operating family also helped out when needed.

With technological advances came changes for the Sand Creek Telephone Company. In 1957, the company upgraded its system to Automatic Dial Operation. Customers received a letter detailing how calling procedures would change. New equipment from Stromberg-Carlson was purchased to support the new direct dial technology. The old wooden telephones were collected and replaced with updated ones. Switchboard operators were no longer needed; however, business was still conducted at the Lot Six location until 1995.

The last twenty years brought more change for Sand Creek Telephone Company than throughout the previous eighty years. The company has prevailed in the struggle to keep up with ever-advancing technology. By 1990, it was able to provide cellular phone service to customers and in 1995 the company installed its first fiber-optic cable and was officially ready for the Internet age. By this time, the company had over nine hundred subscribers. In 1996, the company became Sand Creek Communications Company and expanded to its current location on the southeast corner of West Gorman Road and Sand Creek Highway.

Sand Creek Telephone Company, a valued communications provider, has long been a source of pride in the Adrian community. In the old days, customers often stopped in to

pay their bills in person and catch up on town news or gossip. One couple even decided to get married while they were sitting on the wooden plank in the front office. Although the company has changed with technological advances, it continues to be a part of the community that gave it a start, never forgetting its original purpose—connecting neighbor with neighbor.

Madam Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Sand Creek Telephone Company for its one hundred years of service to the rural areas of south central Michigan. From one hundred subscribers in the beginning to over eleven hundred today, Sand Creek Telephone Company remains a treasured small-town success. May others know of my high regard for its esteemed service, as well as my best wishes for the future.

HONORING A GENUINE HEROINE,
IRENA SENDLER, WHO RISKED
HER LIFE FOR THOUSANDS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 1, 2008

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today because every so often, an everyday person of not-so-everyday valor risks personal injury and livelihood—to little fanfare—for the good of humanity. Today, we provide that deserved fanfare to one of those unsung heroes, Irena Sendler, a woman of such rock-steady courage that she fearlessly saved lives in the face of Nazi opposition. The protection of even one life is immeasurably valuable, but Ms. Sendler rescued over 2,500 of them, mostly Jewish children languishing in Poland's Warsaw ghetto during the Holocaust. Ms. Sendler died this past May at 98, but that giving spirit remains a shining exemplar of what humanity can accomplish, of what we all aspire to emulate.

Such selflessness is not easy. She was arrested, tortured, and sentenced to death by the Gestapo for her heroic acts, ferrying children from run-down ghettos that had left them vulnerable to disease, execution, and deportation to concentration camps. She escaped from prison and continued to do her good—and remarkably dangerous—works. These are the glowing stories that, buried in the overwhelmingly horrific and dark period in history that was the Holocaust, remind us that although there can be unspeakable evil, we are always capable of combating it with good.

Her death is a loss of a compassionate and awe-inspiring human being for this world, but her story is immortal. May it continue to warm our hearts and edify our lives.